

What is claimed is:

1. A mitral annuloplasty device, comprising:

a ring-shaped structural component sized for mitral valve annuloplasty, said structural component having a relatively shallowly curved anterior portion and a relatively steeper curved C-shaped posterior portion including a central portion and first and second lateral portions,

wherein said posterior portion includes demarcations between said first lateral portion and said central portion and between said central portion and said second lateral portion facilitating removal of said central portion from between said first and second lateral portions.

2. An annuloplasty device according to claim 1, wherein:

said demarcations are structural.

3. An annuloplasty device according to claim 2, further comprising:

visual indicia coincident with said structural demarcations.

4. An annuloplasty device according to claim 3, wherein:

said structural component is provided with a relatively softer outer layer, and said visual indicia is provided on said outer layer.

5. An annuloplasty device according to claim 3, wherein:

said first and second lateral portions each include one of a trigone marking and a commissure marking.

6. An annuloplasty device according to claim 1, wherein:

said lateral portions are oriented substantially transverse to said central portion.

7. An annuloplasty device according to claim 1, wherein:

said central and first and second lateral portions define a plane, and said first and second lateral portions are relatively stiffer than said central portion in a direction transverse to said plane.

8. An annuloplasty device according to claim 1, wherein:

said central portion defines a cross-sectional shape that is rounder than a cross-sectional shape defined by said first and second lateral portions.

9. An annuloplasty device according to claim 1, further comprising:

means for identifying sets of suturing locations on said device, each said set corresponding to a discrete predetermined amount of cinching of an annulus of a mitral valve.

10. An annuloplasty device according to claim 9, wherein:

said means for identifying includes visual indicia.

11. An annuloplasty device according to claim 10, wherein:

said visual indicia includes sets of visual indicia distinguished by at least one of color and shape.

12. An annuloplasty device according to claim 11, wherein:

said means for identifying includes discrete indicia corresponding to each of said sets of suturing locations, and said indicia corresponding to each of said sets are

spaced apart from each other by a distance different than a distance by which indicia in the other of said sets is spaced apart.

13. A mitral annuloplasty device, comprising:

a C-shaped structural component sized for mitral valve annuloplasty, said structural component including a central portion and first and second lateral portions,

wherein said structural component includes demarcations between said first lateral portion and said central portion and between said central portion and said second lateral portion facilitating removal of said central portion from between said first and second lateral portions.

14. An annuloplasty device according to claim 13, wherein:

said demarcations are structural.

15. An annuloplasty device according to claim 14, further comprising:

visual indicia coincident with said structural demarcations.

16. An annuloplasty device according to claim 15, wherein:

said structural component is provided with a relatively softer outer layer, and said visual indicia is provided on said outer layer.

17. An annuloplasty device according to claim 15, wherein:

said first and second lateral portions each include one of a trigone marking and a commissure marking.

18. An annuloplasty device according to claim 13, wherein:

said lateral portions are oriented substantially transverse to said central portion.

19. An annuloplasty device according to claim 13, wherein:

said central and first and second lateral portions define a plane, and said first and second lateral portions are relatively stiffer than said central portion in a direction transverse to said plane.

20. An annuloplasty ring according to claim 13, wherein:

said structural component further includes an anterior portion anteriorly coupling said first and second lateral portions, such that said ring is annular in shape.

21. An annuloplasty device according to claim 13, wherein:

said central portion defines a cross-sectional shape that is rounder than a cross-sectional shape defined by said first and second lateral portions.

22. An annuloplasty device according to claim 13, further comprising:

means for identifying sets of suturing locations on said device, each said set corresponding to a discrete predetermined amount of cinching of an annulus of a mitral valve.

23. An annuloplasty device according to claim 22, wherein:

said means for identifying includes visual indicia.

24. An annuloplasty device according to claim 23, wherein:

said visual indicia includes sets of visual indicia distinguished by at least one of color and shape.

25. An annuloplasty device according to claim 22, wherein:

said means for identifying includes discrete indicia corresponding to each of said sets of suturing locations, and said indicia corresponding to each of said sets are spaced apart from each other by a distance different than a distance by which indicia in the other of said sets is spaced apart.

26. A method for mitral valve annuloplasty, comprising:

a) providing an annuloplasty device having a central posterior portion and first and second lateral posterior portions;

b) coupling lateral posterior portions of an annulus of the mitral valve to the first and second lateral posterior portions of the annuloplasty device; and

c) removing the central posterior portion of the annuloplasty device while maintaining the coupling between the lateral posterior portions of the annulus of the mitral valve and the first and second lateral posterior portions of the annuloplasty device.

27. A method according to claim 26, wherein:

said providing includes providing an annuloplasty device in which said first and second lateral posterior portions are at least one of stiffer and thicker than said central posterior portion.